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The Challenge of the Open Door

BY HAROLD C. PHILLIPS

I will tarry at Ephesus till Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries. I Corinthians 16:8-9.

ONE of the very heartening things about the religious life is that the modern Christian is not called to travel an uncharted country, but to walk a road well marked by those who have gone before. Indeed this is true not only of religion but of all areas of human life and experience. The scientist of today does not enter his laboratory to wrestle single-handed with the problems of the natural world. He is heir to a noble fellowship of kindred minds who have preceded him. By their mistakes he learns to avoid similar errors, and their successes are rungs of a ladder upon which he climbs to new achievements. We moderns sometimes speak slightingly of "the dead past," but could we by some stretch of the imagination visualize a world from which all that previous generations have thought, discovered or experienced was obliterated, we should find that the past, instead of being dead, is a sort of living granery which feeds and sustains us every day of our lives.

Surely this is true of the religious past. In these difficult, dangerous and yet momentous days, is it not reassuring to realize that Christians of other ages have faced and lived through similar experiences? I could not help realizing that as I thought of those words of St. Paul, written to the church at Corinth: "For a great door and effectual is opened up unto me, and there are many adversaries."

There *are* many adversaries. Indeed one cannot read the writings of this man without sensing in the very metaphors and similes he uses something of the tenseness and danger of the days in which he lived. There is very little in the writings of St. Paul about

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lying down in green pastures or being led by still waters. Rather we are in an atmosphere of conflict, of struggle, of opposition. Like athletes we must run against speedy competitors, or wrestle with the rulers of darkness, or like soldiers we must endure hardships and fight the good fight. We must watch, stand fast and quit ourselves like men. For in truth the New Testament was forged in one of the fiery periods of human history. The early Christians had to win their way against the severest sort of opposition and heart-breaking discouragements. That they did so has been a tonic for Christians ever since.

We are not surprised then to hear St. Paul saying to the Christians at Corinth—"I will tarry at Ephesus till Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

IN LIFE—ALWAYS MANY ADVERSARIES

Observe in the first place what a true picture of life this is—a great door, many adversaries. There are some of us who would no doubt agree with Peter who said that Paul wrote "some things hard to be understood," but we have no difficulty in understanding this statement of his. Paul was writing from Ephesus, where he had been for almost three years, an unusually long time for him. He stays there because a great door is opened to him, that is to say, there are great opportunities for service. Like Jesus, he too saw the fields white unto harvest. "And there are many adversaries." There was something about this city which made his work particularly difficult. As a student of those times tells us: "The superstition of all Asia was concentrated at Ephesus" and the mob spirit in that city often carried the persecution of the Christians beyond the limits set by the Roman officials.

Here then is the picture St. Paul presents. A great door, many adversaries. A great opportunity, many obstacles; a great chance to advance, but strong opposition. That is life. It is well to stress this a bit. For you will observe that St. Paul does not say, "A great door is opened up unto me, *but* unfortunately there are many adversaries." He says, "A great door is opened up unto me and of course there are many adversaries." He uses not a preposition but a conjunction; he joins the adversaries to the great door. As much as to say that whenever a great door is opened, there are always many adversaries in front of it.

A good illustration of this truth may be found in the Old Testament. You will recall that when Moses stood on the borders of the promised land, he sent an advance guard to spy out the land. Said he to them: "Get you up this way southward . . . And see the land what it is . . . whether it be good or bad, and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds." He concluded his command by saying, wisely, "And be ye of good courage." The spies were not unanimous in their report. Some of them said it was a wonderful land, flowing with milk and honey. They brought back luscious bunches of grapes, which attested the fertility of the soil. They were all for moving in immediately, and possessing it. But others reported differently. They said the people in the land were strong, the cities walled and very great, that there were giants in it, in comparison with which the Israelites were as grasshoppers. Some saw a great door, others saw adversaries.

Who was right? Both were right. For every promised land is guarded by giants. Every opportunity is beset by obstacles. Every advance we make is made in the face of opposition. Every great door has its many adversaries—that is "the challenge of the open door."

THE GOSPEL PUTS DOORS IN WALLS

Let us in the second place look a little more at the open door. It is a suggestive figure. There is something inviting about it. The figure occurs more than once in the New Testament. "I am the door," said Jesus. And the seer of the Revelation writes: "Behold I have set before you an open door and no man can shut it." In a sense this figure of the open door comes nearer to expressing the deepest intent or truth of Christianity than any other. For this is just what the Christian gospel came to do for man, to put doors where hitherto there had been walls; to open up for man new approaches to old problems, new entrances into unexplored countries; to bring him release and escape from age-long frustrations, by pointing to a new way out of them through an open door. It is no exaggeration to say that there is no stone wall against which we human beings batter our heads in vain but that Christ has put a door there for us, if we could but find it, and use it. As the author of the Book of Hebrews says, he has opened up "a new and living way."

It is difficult to speak in these days without referring to the war. What a stone wall that has been for mankind! Such modern fortifications as the French Maginot line or the most aptly named German West Wall, both of which, so it is claimed, are impregnable, are literal descriptions of what war is—the West Wall. War is a wall against which, from the dawn of history until now, men have battered their heads in vain; and to date there has not been found a way through that wall. It surrounds us. It entombs us.

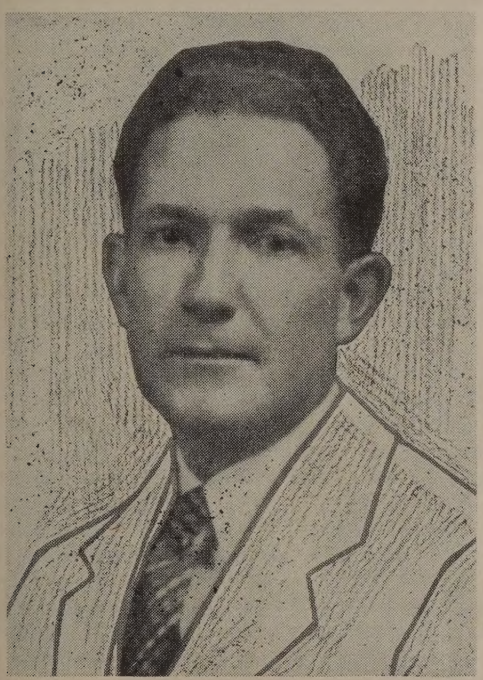
But there is a way. A great door and effectual has been opened up through that wall, the door of peace. The fact that we have not found it does not mean that it is not there, any more than the fact that a man has taken a wrong road means that the right road is not there. That door is there. It is a great door and effectual, and it has been wide open, inviting us through all the centuries. Within recent years we came to the very threshold of that door and it looked as if we might go through it, but the adversaries were too much for us. The giants frightened us away from the promised land.

SOME MODERN 'ADVERSARIES'

What were these adversaries? Our so-called "enlightened self-interest," which has proved to be anything but enlightened; our nationalistic pride and greed and selfishness; our shortsighted policies which promise momentary advantage but ultimate hardship. When we saw these adversaries, instead of tarrying at Ephesus as

did St. Paul, and fighting our way past them through the open door, we left Ephesus. But that is not because a great door and effectual is not there. It is there. It is open—and no man can shut it. Said Ruskin: "I do not wonder at what man suffers, but I wonder at what man misses." Ah! the great and effectual door of peace—shall we ever pass through it to the promised land?

Or consider some of the doors that God in Christ has opened up to us as individuals. For instance, there is the door of repentance. Whatever may be our interpretation of that suggestive story of the Garden of Eden, this much is true, that it records one of the greatest discoveries that man has ever made, namely,



HAROLD C. PHILLIPS

the knowledge of good and evil, that some things are right and other things are wrong; or, in other words, that in each one of us there is the capacity for sin and the capacity for communion with God.

A freshman girl in one of our American colleges is reported to have said to her professor: "Professor, what the dickens is sin?" But most of us, I fancy, have passed through the freshman class, we know what sin is. We know that sin builds around a man's inner life a veritable wall which he cannot break through. The story has it that a little boy was once examining a test book on physiology which was being used by his older brother. This book contained highly colored diagrams picturing all the internal organs of the human body. The little lad looked at them and said: "Well, it's not very nice, but it's inside us." So is sin. Not very nice, but inside us. And the fact that it is inside us makes it, as modern psychology abundantly shows, all the more difficult to handle. Sin is not something we may walk away from, as from some hideous or revolting spectacle, lying out there somewhere, but something we walk away with. It's inside us. It walls up our inner life so that we cannot see God or apprehend spiritual values. It shuts us off from the world of meaningful purposeful living which gives life dignity and worth. How often have we butted our heads against that wall! Well, a great door and effectual is opened up to us through that wall—the door of repentance.

WHAT REPENTANCE IS

Why do we not pass through that door? Because of the adversaries that guard it. Who does not know them? Who does not know the fascination of some cherished sin, who has not heard the siren voices? Indeed many of us yield so frequently to temptations that the adversary has become quite formidable.

It is said that a man traveling on foot once asked a youth whom he saw by the wayside for the location of a destination he wished to reach. The youth replied: "If you go on the way you are headed it will be about twenty-five thousand miles, but if you turn right-about-face it will be about there." That's what repentance means. It is turning right-about-face. To be sure repentance may begin with a sense of shame, the realization that we are not being true to our best selves, or are "falling short of the glory of God." Repentance may involve remorse and regret, but shame, remorse and regret are not repentance. As the old verse puts it:

> It's not enough to say,
> "I'm sorry, and repent,"
> And then to go on afterwards
> Just as you always went.

Repentance means changing one's mind. So Jesus said to his generation: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Change your mind. You have been thinking wrongly about God, about sin, about life. If your thought be wrong, you are shut up in a prison house. Change your mind. Repent.

The world as we know it, so suggests William Temple, Archbishop of York, is like a shopwindow into which some mischievous person has got overnight and changed all the labels, so that the cheap things have a high price label on them, and the precious things are marked low. The result is that we let ourselves be taken in. Repentance means that change of mind which helps us to get the price labels back in the right place. It brings to us a new sense of values. It means "a complete revaluation of all things we are inclined to think good." Multitudes have found that door through the otherwise impenetrable wall and have discovered on the other side a new life with new meaning, purpose and worth. They have gained insights that have transformed life for them—insights by fighting the adversaries and passing through the open door.

OPEN DOORS FOR THE CHURCH

In the third place the question arises, Can we accept the challenge of the open door? What shall we do about it? There are two things we may do. Some of us pass by the open door because of the adversaries, and

others pass through the open door in spite of the adversaries.

Perhaps we may face these alternatives as a church. A great door is opened to the church today—but when have the adversaries been greater? As we think of the picture painted for us by the New Testament, the picture of what man might be, of the kind of world we might have, and turn from that to behold the kind of world we do have on our hands, how easily might we give way to the adversaries of despair or hopelessness and say, "O why bother, the world has always been like this and will be so world without end—what's the use of trying to make it better?"

Or as we come nearer home and think of our own immediate situation—the adversaries that oppose the gospel here at home, in our own hearts or the hearts of our fellows; our moral inertia, our indifference, our preoccupation; the "don't-careness" which so often characterizes the modern attitude to the church—how easy it is, because of this opposition, to call a halt and give up all hope of an advance—to pass by the open door because of its adversaries!

THE PIONEER OF LIFE

It is here of course that the life of Jesus is so reassuring and means so much to us, as individuals and as a church. A great door was opened to him. He was born in a pagan world, in which men were callous and brutal and life was hard; a world in which outworn traditions and prejudices, like a veritable wall, kept men from seeking and knowing the truth. He came to open up a door through all this, to be the pioneer of a new way for man. But what adversaries he had to face! Hounded by those in authority, hated by the high priests, misunderstood by his loved ones, denied by his best friend, betrayed by his own disciples, forsaken, at last he stood alone against a hostile world. But he stood. He did more than stand. In spite of opposition, he advanced. He became the pioneer of faith. His cross, a symbol of redeeming love and victorious faith, has placed in every wall that entombs the spirit of man a great door and effectual—opened up, no man can shut it. "Come after me," says Jesus, the Leader, "Follow me."

There is a way out for us, in spite of the adversaries, if with God's help we accept the challenge of the open door.

At the heart of the Lord's Prayer there is a petition which guarantees the "materialism" of Christianity: "Give us this day our daily bread." That petition has become meaningless to those whose daily bread is assured. It would gain new meaning which would be true to its original spirit if we allowed a commentary to run through our minds as we pray that prayer. It would run this way: "Give us this day the brains and the conscience so to organize our economic life that the bread which thou hast already given us in abundance may not rot but may be distributed to meet the needs of all people."

John C. Bennett.

The Greatening of Abraham Lincoln

By Edgar DeWitt Jones

Thy gentleness hath made me great. II Samuel 22:36. He endured as seeing him who is invisible. Hebrews 11:27.

In the backwoods of Kentucky, on the twelfth day of February, 1809, in a one-room cabin with a dirt floor and lighted by a single window, Abraham Lincoln was born. From that lowly birth he climbed through struggle and sorrow to the stars of fame and greatness, so that to the ends of the earth the inspiring story of his life has gone to thrill and ennoble millions. To think of America is to remember Lincoln, and to recall his name is to think of the land that gave him birth. It is profitable to consider the greatening of his character both as a statesman and as a man among men.

I

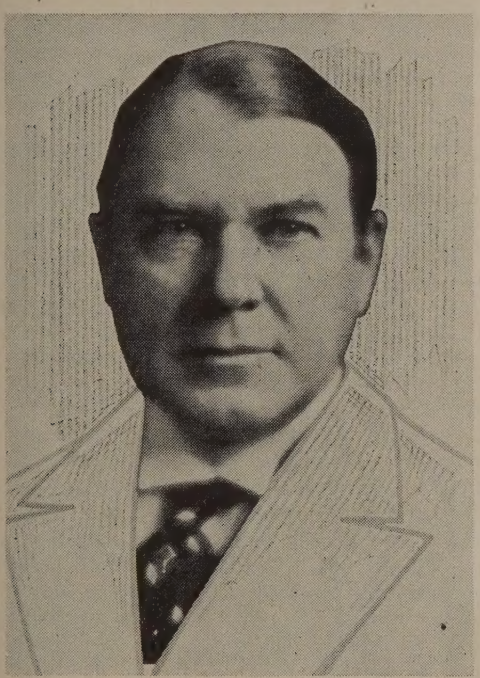
The fifty-six years of Abraham Lincoln's life fall into four well defined periods: seven years in Kentucky; fourteen years in Indiana; thirty-one in Illinois; and four at Washington as President. Here is the epic of America in four stages, scenes, acts. Kentucky, birth and childhood; Indiana, youth and young manhood; Illinois, maturity and national leadership; Washington, the purgatorial years of suffering and the chief citizen receives the martyr's crown.

Lincoln's preparation for public life began early. The very air that he breathed as a boy and young man was freighted with political controversy and the issues that were destined to stir the nation to its depths. Certain books were factors in his fortunes. Judge Wanamaker says that Lincoln learned the ethical side of government from the Holy Scriptures. It may well be true. He knew the Bible and no man in American life has quoted from it so freely and so effectively.

He was a mere boy when he began to study the Declaration of Independence. He analyzed it. He took its doctrines apart and scrutinized them. He quoted oftener from Thomas Jefferson than from any other statesman. He loved to muse over those thrilling words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Lincoln studied the Constitution of the United States; he pored long hours over the *Revised Statutes of Indiana.* These are not textbooks, though he used them as such. He seems to have loved their legal phrasings, the epigrammatic force of some of the sentences. He saw in these documents something more than printed pages. He beheld the country itself, a nation of breathing souls, not having yet attained unto the ideals of the fathers. There was romance in these political papers. He read them not for the hour or the day but for all time. Instead of reading books interpreting these historic writings he went to the fountain itself.

In his Indiana days young Lincoln came into the possession of Weems' *Life of Washington*. He read it many times. It is likely that he could recite whole sections of it from memory. Weems' book is now derided by many who forget that in its chapters there is gold along with the dross. Lincoln saw nothing absurd in this book, nothing to laugh at, but much to praise and remember. It probably never occurred to him to question the cherry tree incident or to doubt that in the awful winter in Valley Forge Washington unburdened himself before Almighty God in prayer. The Lincoln of this period was a hero worshiper, and I think, in a modified form, was so until the day of his death. He



EDGAR DEWITT JONES

venerated Washington, admired Jefferson, idolized Henry Clay.

He was early getting into politics. He ran for the legislature in 1832, when he was but twenty-two years of age. He was defeated. He ran again in 1834, and was elected. He served four terms in all in the legislature of Illinois, was elected to Congress over Peter Cartwright in 1846, was a presidential elector on the Whig ticket in 1844, and made speeches for Henry Clay. He campaigned for Scott in 1852, was defeated for the United States Senate in 1855, was a presidential elector on the Republican ticket in 1856, and campaigned for John C. Fremont. He was nominated for the United States Senate by his party in 1858, and out of this came the debates with Douglas that made Lincoln an international figure. He was defeated but in that defeat his victory for the presidency was assured. Elected in 1860 as chief magistrate of the nation, he was reelected in 1864. Thus the preparation for citizenship in Kentucky, expedited and enriched in Indiana, was followed by thirty-one years of politics, lawmaking, office-holding, and the practice of law.

II

The greatening of Lincoln's political philosophy is an arresting study. The student of his speeches and public papers is embarrassed by the wealth of material. I am minded to select one paragraph from a speech not so familiar to the rank and file as other Lincoln addresses despite the fact that it was an important deliverance. This speech was delivered by Mr. Lincoln at the outset of the Civil War, and this particular paragraph contains what I should call the quintessence of his political principles:

> This is essentially a people's contest. . . . It is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from the shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partisan and temporary departure from necessity, this after all is the leading object of the government for whose existence we contend.

Here are four mighty affirmations of a political creed truly Lincolnian. They are worth much pondering since they are fundamental in the life of a republic.

Take the first: "To elevate the condition of men." This is basic democracy. It is applied Christianity also. In the synagogue of his home town Jesus selected a passage from the prophet Isaiah and applied the same to himself. Who can forget those eloquent words? "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Here Lincoln affirms that it is the object of such a government as ours to better conditions of living. Was he thinking of the several kinds of serfdom that endanger a people—industrial, social, economic? Was there especially in his mind the condition of four millions of Negroes, victims of slavery? The answer is "yes" to both questions.

Second: "To lift artificial weights from the shoulders." The word "artificial" is used here with discrimination. What about the "natural" rights of men? Lincoln is getting back to the Declaration of Independence. Consider the artificial burdens that rest heavily on drooping shoulders—unjust systems of taxation, iniquitous tariffs, unfair and discriminating legislation. Whatever weighs down the backs of men with burdens that are intolerable, it is the high business of a government by the people and for the people to remove. And it is something that is never finished; it must be a long-drawn-out process.

Third: "To clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all." It would seem a paradox that in democracy the paths of laudable pursuits would ever be cluttered up by obstructions that would hinder the humblest citizen in the pursuit of happiness. But a democracy does not miraculously change human nature. Men are pretty

much the same under any form of government. Human passions and selfishness persist whatever the system of government. Of political blowers of bubbles, we have an embarrassing host. A democracy must be interested in clearing paths, blazing highways, cutting channels that the spirit of the people, their hopes and dreams may find free course, and be fruitful.

Fourth: "To afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life." This may seem a repetition of what has already been stated, but it is not. Rather, it is an amplification. The first few years of life practically settle destiny, and "an unfettered start" would mean wholesome food, adequate shelter and clothing. It would mean education. It would mean everyman's opportunity. We have not yet achieved such a happy state of affairs. Great hosts of our citizens are fettered at the start, handicapped in the race of life by conditions which they did not make and over which they have no control. Mr. Lincoln knew from experience how hard it is to rise above the level of one's environment. He knew that slavery was wrong, and averred that no man however good is good enough to own another human being. He believed that politicians should take their case to the people and he held with Jefferson that if the people were informed, the people would not go far wrong.

III

Abraham Lincoln's greatening ideals of governmental affairs included the belief that God is and that he is a rewarder of them who seek after him. His religion has been the subject of innumerable controversies, some of them acrimonious and withal unwarranted. For, by his own writings and undisputed utterances, he wrote and talked as a man of faith and prayer. He may have been skeptical in the old Salem and early Springfield days. Who of us has not known seasons when religion seemed remote and trust in God not yet a fact of experience? Lincoln's faith grew; it grew slowly and flowered during those terrible years of the presidency, until that faith became the strongest force in his life, as he bore on his patient shoulders the awful burden of state and struggled to preserve the integrity of the federal union.

Mr. Lincoln often referred to the precepts of Christianity; what is more important, he practiced them. We do not know what theories of prayer he held, for he never explained; we only know that during his presidency, he was a praying man. Once he told a delegation of ministers that he conceived of prayer as bringing him to the side of God, not as winning God over to his side. He believed in One whom he sometimes called "That Divine Being," and again, "The Almighty Architect." The subtle creeds and finespun theological speculations so rife in his day troubled and perplexed him. He once said, in answer to a question why he was not a member of church: "When any church will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualifications for membership, the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul."

It may be said by way of comment on this quotation that the statement of Jesus with respect to the law and the gospel is written on the altars of all the churches, but so much else is also written there that is secondary and relatively unimportant that the fundamental teachings of Jesus are obscured. Slowly and surely this man's faith deepened, expanded, flowered. When Lincoln lay dead and the country was wracked with grief and anxiety, James A. Garfield addressed from the balcony of a New York hotel a throng of excited and sorrow-stricken citizens. "God reigns," he said, "and the government at Washington still lives." It might profit us today to affirm that the government as conceived by our fathers lives only so long as it remembers that God reigns.

IV

The moral grandeur of Lincoln was both an endowment and achievement. His lineage was better than some of his biographers would have us believe. Back of this son of the wilderness was a long line of sturdy, God-fearing ancestors. Note the biblical names that appear in this family: Abraham, Enoch, Mordecai, Levi, and the like. Thomas Lincoln came upon hard times, owing to the death of his father at the hands of marauding Indians and the fact that the huge tract of Kentucky land which he owned was lost through inability to clear the title. There was the stuff of virile manhood in the youth, and this he developed and refined in the school of hardship, privation and disappointment. Nobody presented him anything on a silver platter, not even the presidency.

It was in the early Salem days that he was first called "Honest Abe." Usually a boy who is honest in little things will grow into a man whose honesty is equal to the day of large things. Thus, to the larger issues of life Mr. Lincoln brought the same punctilious concern as was in evidence in the old days at New Salem, when he trudged three miles and back to the home of a woman customer to restore the sum of six and one-quarter cents that was due her. His partner failing to meet the obligations of the business adventure in that village store, Lincoln assumed the full responsibility. It took him seventeen years to pay off this obligation, to which he humorously referred as "the national debt."

Mr. Lincoln cared little for money, defining wealth as a "superfluity of what we don't need." His fees were small even where large ones were warranted. Nor could he bring himself to take a case where the ethics were suspect. Nothing so tests a man's integrity as a political career. When Mr. Lincoln ran for Congress in 1846 his friends presented him with an expense fund of $200. After the election he returned $199.75 to the donors, explaining that he had spent 25 cents for cider, with which he treated a group of harvest hands at work in a field. Perhaps there is no lesson that this generation can so properly take to heart as this one of common honesty, which was bedrock in the life of the Civil War President.

A more patient man never lived. He was patient

with his plodding father, his ailing wife, his lively children; patient with the scholarly and sometimes presumptuous Secretary Seward; with the fiery and irascible Secretary Stanton; with the imperious and ambitious Secretary Chase; with the rude and arrogant McClellan. He was patient with the preachers who urged him to take more decisive action; with the politicians who were always on his flank trying to goad him into momentous decisions before the time was ripe. He was patient with himself, and, I say it reverently, patient with God.

In some respects the loveliest tribute ever paid this "homely hero" was that of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll: "Lincoln was the grandest figure of the fiercest civil war. He is the gentlest memory of our world." The goodness of his heart was such as to bewilder his foes. Thus he said: "I have not only suffered for the South, I have suffered with the South." Writing to his long-time friend, Joshua Speed, he said: "I have never knowingly planted a thorn in any human heart, but I have always endeavored to pluck a thorn and plant a rose wherever a rose would grow." And from the soil of this man's personality, watered by tears and enriched by sorrow, sprang into life and flowered this sentiment: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in." Verily, his gentleness has made us great.

Abraham Lincoln's soul greatened under the burdens he bore as President. Up to that time his religious life was not deep or serious, though his morals were excellent. His cardinal virtues were Christian all through the years. But it was not until he passed through these purgatorial years that the dross of his character fell away, and what remained seemed pure gold. He leaned hard upon the Everlasting Arms; he bowed humbly in the presence of the Eternal, and prayed for light that he might walk in the path of truth and justice. He heard the news of the success of the Northern armies with gratitude but without exultation. Peace, peace, at last! How best to bind up the nation's wounds and to care for the widow and the orphan; how best to reunite in unseverable bonds the nation that had been broken—this he was brooding over when lo, a shot rang out and "prophecy was dumb!"

Abraham Lincoln was not a demigod. He was human. He had his weaknesses. His foibles were well known to his friends; they were better known to himself. Yet his imperfections were trivial compared to his basic virtues. His flaws were as spots on a glorious sun. They do not so much as touch the grand qualities that made him what he was. Consider the elements that so mixed in him as to give him an Olympian stature. He was tolerant. He was temperate. He was generous. He was merciful. He was magnanimous. He was forgiving. He was just. He was kind. He was faithful. He was honest. He was humble. He was diligent. He was truthful. He was prayerful.

A blend of mirth and sadness, of smiles and tears,
A quaint knight errant of the pioneers;
A homely hero, born of star and sod;
A peasant-prince: a masterpiece of God.

Following the Multitude

By Franklin J. Kennedy

Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil. Exodus 23:2.

SOMETIMES the most innocent looking passages in the Old Testament are loaded to explode in the face of events. They are like a "jack-in-the-box," in which a coiled-spring sentence is ready to leap out with alarming pertinence when the right turn of affairs touches it off.

The twenty-third chapter of Exodus has at least two sentences that "pop up" when you open it today. "You must not oppress a resident alien," Goodspeed's rendering of the ninth verse is as timely as the breakfast broadcast of the news, and aims straight at our mood of provincial nationalism. The other word which leaps at you as if to say "I caught you doing it, didn't I?" is the one I would choose as a text: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."

It is hard to believe that someone was not sitting on the fence, watching the parade of 1939 go by, when he uttered that warning. Following a multitude! That seems just about to sum up the special and peculiar occupation of our day. It finds us where we are, living in bigger and bolder crowds. We are losing our individualities to the mass, our mentalities to the herd, and our moral judgments to the pack. In the day of evil portents, we are shaping our destiny by crowd action as never before in man's history.

'WE ARE MADE THAT WAY'

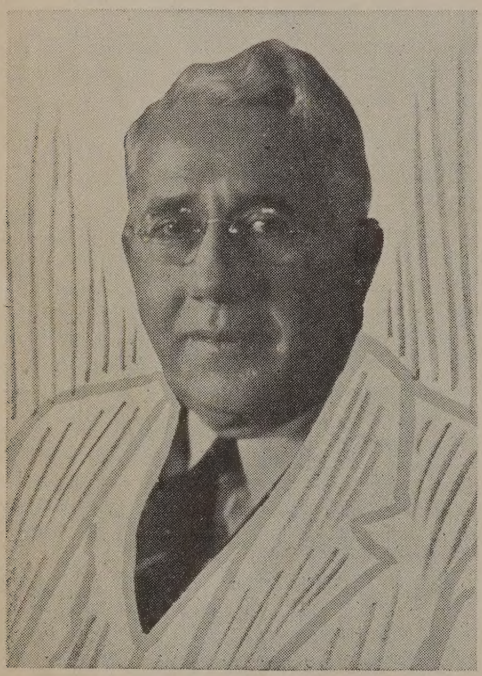
Following a multitude! Living in crowds! That is not the essence of the evil. That is simply what human beings like best to do. It is, in an essential sense, an expression of our very nature. We are made that way. We do not like to be odd or peculiar. Witness the discomfiture of the man who finds himself the only one in evening dress at an informal gathering, or perhaps the only one not in evening attire.

The arbiters of women's fashions trade on this dread of being odd. Sometimes it seems as if a perverse genius were trying to devise something women will refuse to wear when it is the style. There is a little inside story going around the Fifth Avenue millinery shops. A woman designer of hats, it appears, entertained a company one evening by trimming the most absurd creation she could think of, in the mode of the hour, out of such incongruous bits as her hostess could provide at the moment. Her caricature of her own art was greeted with such hilarity that she took the grotesque creation to her Fifth Avenue shop next morning to regale her salespeople with the masquerade. She laid it aside for the first busy hours. The denouement has no great element of surprise in it. When she looked for it, she found it had been priced and sold to a distinguished customer at a most exclusive figure. And, as the story runs, she was not sure whether she was shocked or thrilled. It must

have been in the prevailing mode after all, she reflected, and nothing more was needed to make it right.

By nature we are uncomfortable only when we are different. And this trait is, after all, the basis of our social organization. The fact that we do move with the crowd makes it possible to create communities and cultures. We call this the social instinct. It is basic in our moral natures. We like the approval of other people. We dread their disapproval. And most of our ideas of right and wrong are derived from the things of which normal people approve or disapprove. If no one cared what other people thought or did, we would have no moral standards at all.

But this trait, so essential to common morality, is also the cause of our lack of courage when the judgments of



FRANKLIN J. KENNEDY

the crowd become warped. A multitude bent on evil is as dangerous to our character as a multitude bent on good is stimulating to it. At such times we must have other bases for moral judgments than crowd approval. We need a high degree of independent individuality to keep our heads up and our faces in the right direction. There is a place and a time for breaking away from the crowd and going it on our own. There are crises which call for sturdy individual morality, if we would be men and not just members of a mob.

STANDING AGAINST A MULTITUDE

Paul made such a distinction. He argued for the spirit of social cooperation when he said, "In Rome do as the Romans do." Do not be a hick—a queer one! In eating, in dress and social customs, follow the standards approved by the society around you. But there never was a sturdier, more uncompromising individual than Paul when it came to conduct which his conscience must judge. He could stand out then against the emperor with all the four hundred of Rome thrown in, and the jeers of a crowd for a chorus. But he had a secret of moral courage. He sought the approval of one, and not a crowd, when the matter in hand touched the destiny of his soul. He had an anchor to windward when the crowd was drifting toward evil.

Have we enough of this moral individuality for such a day as this?

This is a day when men who have lost their way, whose moral standards are down, who have ceased to think for themselves, are trying to find salvation by running with the pack. Whatever their crowd is saying is the gospel. And a bitter gospel it is at times.

One need only point out that the cauldron brewing in Europe is a concoction of mob morality. The press, the radio, swift means of communication have all been employed for the most terrifying experiment in mob raising our world has ever seen. Nations that yesterday were civilized are unthinking mobs today, intoxicated with the voices of their leaders and drunk on their own shoutings, among whom no individual judgment and no private conscience is any longer tolerated. The leaders boast that they have done away with all opposition, that they have achieved a single party, a single will, an absolute unity. Absolute unity! Literally the ultimate of the mob. That unity is the most irrational and terrifying force ever let loose on earth. It is the Frankenstein which modern man has created for his own destruction. With such a spectacle before us, it is easy to see again what our forefathers so clearly saw, that our salvation lies in nonconformity of the soul, in uncompromising, moral individuality.

WHAT A MOB DOES TO MORALS

We have not yet achieved unity in this country. Thank God! We are still divided by opinions and parties. But we have our crowds, and there are signs to indicate that they are running together.

We have a crowd who do not like the Jews. We have always had such individuals. But only recently they have become a crowd, and being a crowd now they publicly boast attitudes that would have brought a blush of shame to the cheek of anyone of them a few years ago. A business man of my town, a Scotsman by name, son of a race that gave us Robert Burns and his immortal humanitarianism, said to me the other day: "Hitler's only mistake is his attack on the church. What he has done to the Jews is not enough. Had he sliced everyone of them up on a meat block, I would have liked him better." That man would not have dared utter such a word to a decent citizen five years ago, let alone the minister. That is what a crowd can do to your moral sense.

Go to Fiftieth Street and Broadway any Sunday afternoon at three o'clock if you want to see what a crowd can achieve in moral delinquency. There, in June, July and August, you would have seen and heard things that could have happened in the pogroms of old Russia. And while you recoiled in disgust, you would have been importuned to buy Father Coughlin's *Social Justice* and keep the work going. To Father Coughlin, who boasts that he is ready to fight the Franco way, I suggest a text

for one of his Sunday preachments, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." And I suggest that he consider also the ethics of raising such a multitude.

WHEN CROWDS RUN TOGETHER

But the real danger of such crowds as Father Coughlin is raising comes when they merge with other crowds on the basis of common hatreds and discontents. And there are other crowds.

There is a crowd that has grown weary of labor racketeering and strikes and picket lines; and, being weary, is growing weary also of working men and women. That crowd is growing, and, becoming a crowd, it is losing its sense, its Christian sense, its American sense, of justice for the working man.

There is a crowd of discontent, having no understanding in common except impatience with everything that is, and contempt for everything that is being tried. This crowd has no program of its own, no proposals to offer for human betterment, only criticism of the current scene. It is a dangerous crowd, because everyone can criticize, and criticism can become the meeting ground when all the crowds merge.

Let such crowds as these merge and find their unity, and they will achieve the final disaster of our civilization.

Have we enough individual, independent, moral judgment to meet the threat of such a unity? That is the test before us. When we talk about religion as a solvent, and the church as a saving force, we are talking about creating, in the name of Christ, just that independence of character. We mean that the Christian church can create a body of men and women who will not follow a multitude to do evil, or think evil, or wish evil to anyone anywhere.

The Challenge

THE NEED of the hour is not more factories or materials, not more railroads or steamships, not more armies or more navies, but rather more education based on the teaching of Jesus. The prosperity of our country depends on the motives and purposes of the people. These motives and purposes are directed only in the right course through religion. In spite of their imperfections, this is why I believe in our churches, and why I am a great optimist on their future.

We stand at the cross-roads. We must choose between God and Mammon. Materialism is undermining our civilization as it has undermined other civilizations. Unless we heed the warning in time and get back to the real fundamentals, we must fall even as the civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome fell—and for the same reason.

Statistics of every nation indicate that true religion is the power necessary for the development of its resources, and for its successful continuation. The challenge goes out to every man to support his church, to take an active part in the religious life of his community, to live according to the simple principles upon which this, the greatest country in the world, was founded three hundred years ago.

ROGER W. BABSON.

Going Backward to Go Forward

BY ROBERT E. SPEER

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. Isaiah 30:21.

SOME years ago the editor of one of our best known religious papers invited me to write an article for him on "The Next Great Step for the Church." I wrote the article and urged that the next great step before the Christian Church today should be backward. The editor was a fair man and he published my article, but I fear he thought it was hopelessly reactionary. As a matter of fact it was a revolutionary article. It went on, as I recall, to say that the next forward step should be back into the old eternal, unchanging things. If we should go back to the New Testament and recover there the ideals and the spring out of which flows the power of their realization, it would revolutionize the Christian Church and the world today. Men would again exclaim at the emergence of "the men who turn the world upside down."

Professor Phelps of Yale said that the trouble with Jesus is that his thoughts are still a thousand years ahead of us. This was a conservative judgment. The trouble is not that they are a thousand years ahead but more likely ten thousand. And we are so far from following him that we have really lost sight of him. And how far behind St. Paul also we are! What would not happen in our world today if the Christian should lay hold of and be laid hold of by two such principles as Paul taught? A husband should love his wife as Christ loved his church. Suppose that kind of love were in our hearts today? What a change would take place in society if we could commence to live by such a principle as that, and by the other principle of unity, that in Jesus Christ all chasms and gulfs are closed, that there is no difference between male and female, black and white, citizen and foreigner; no difference between race and race, and nation and nation, but all are one in the unity of the body of Christ.

The trouble is not that the Bible is an old and unfamiliar book, ancient and outworn. The trouble is that it is a new and unknown book, still far, far ahead of the faith and obedience of the Christian Church. It is still not a static record but a "living oracle." What would happen in the world if we were honestly to go back to the Bible to gain the ideals which are shown there in Jesus Christ and the Apostolic church and to discover for ourselves afresh the fountain of the life and power of the early Christians?

There are four regards in which we need to return today to the Bible.

I

First, we need to recover the primitive Christian conception of Christian personality, of what a man can and should be, and what by the grace of God he can become in Christ.

We listen again to the words Jesus spoke to that little band of men: "I have left you an example." "A new command I gave unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you." "As my Father hath sent me into the world, even so I send you." And the words which trouble me more than any other words in the New Testament: "He that believeth on Me the works shall he do also, and greater works shall he do because I go before you." This was the ideal that Christ held up before his disciples. They were to be and do what they had seen in him.

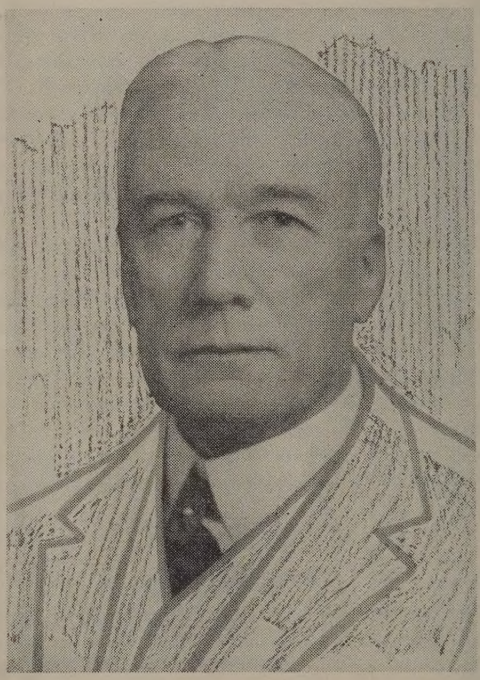
It is true that Harnack holds that the idea of the imitability of Jesus is not to be found in the Christian literature of the second century. But it is certainly found in the New Testament. It is in St. John: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." It is in St. Peter: "He left us an example that we should follow in his steps." St. Paul declared more boldly still: "Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ." The early church lived in the memory of one who was the Son of God but who also called himself—and it was his favorite title—the Son of man, the ideal of what God had meant man to be, of what man might yet become by the grace and the strength of God. St. Paul set forth the ideal as a duty in more than one great passage and told the Corinthian Christians that he and they, with open face beholding or reflecting as in a mirror the character of the Lord, were to be changed into the same image from character to character, and he conceived the end of the whole ministry of God's grace in the Christian Church to be a perfecting of men until they should come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

In a measure that witnessed to the reality of the supernatural grace that wrought in them, the Christians of the first generation were uplifted in response to such ideals. We see the fishermen of Galilee and the young student from Tarsus transformed, magnified and empowered by the energy of God to be what otherwise they could never have been and to do what otherwise they could never have done. And in the later years there have not lacked those who saw this ideal of the possibility of Christian personality and who laid themselves in the molding hands of Christ. After the Apostles came Ignatius and Justin and Irenaeus and Clement and Tertullian and Origen, and across the years they have been followed by Francis of Assisi and Raymond Lull and Martin Luther and Zinzendorf and William Carey, and in our own American church by men like Edwards and Hodge and Bushnell and Finney and Moody, and other men whom we ourselves have known, who were not content with our conventional mediocrity but who reached out in faith and trust and longing toward our Lord's own assurance: "He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto the Father."

The mold of New Testament manhood has not been broken. The powers which made common men great and strong in the past are available still. We need to return to the New Testament ideal and obligation of such manhood in Christian men.

II

We need to return to the Bible also to recover and realize its ideal of the Christian Church as an unbreakable family fellowship. This was the central note of the church at the beginning. There were, indeed, other notes. There was the note of witness. It was a primary function of the early church that it should go out to witness to the world of what it had seen and heard and what its hands had handled of the Word of Life. It was an essential requirement of the apostolate that men should have companied with Jesus and should be



Robert E. Speer

able to bear witness to the resurrection. Christ did not send his disciples out to argue about the truth of Christianity. "Ye shall be my witnesses" is his last word. And another true note of the early church was work. "We must work the works of him that sent me while it is day," said Jesus. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." This was the obligation of all God's other sons. "Go work today in my vineyard." The early church went out to spend and be spent in the service of One whom the zeal of his Father's house had consumed. And not witness and work only, but worship also was a note of primitive Christianity. This was its free instinct. The first converts "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. Continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God."

But all these notes of witness and work and worship were corporate. They were done together. And the rich

experience of the early church while rooted in the deepest individualism was an indissoluble collective experience. "We all," said St. Paul, "are changed into the same image." "We apprehend with all saints the length and breadth and depth and height of the love of God." "We all come in the unity of the faith to a perfect man." Not alone, but together. The early church was a companionship, close, cooperative, united. It was the Body of Christ and nothing was to be allowed to break the unity of that Body. St. Paul would have nothing to do with any parties or factions in the perfect Christian fellowship. He would not sanction any party bearing his own name nor would he allow the name of Christ to be taken by any faction. What he saw and felt in Christ was the power of absolute and irrefragable unity. In him, he declared, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free but Christ is all and in all." "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts to the which also ye are called in one Body."

Christians are not separable, as Rufus Jones has remarked; they are like the half of a round-trip railroad ticket which bears the inscription "Not good if detached." The church is to be the training school for heaven. And the unity of heaven is to be foreshadowed in the unity of the church on earth. That is set forth in as noble terms as it is possible for men to use in Horace Bushnell's great sermon which bears the title "God Organizing in the Church His Eternal Society."

III

In the third place we need to recover the New Testament hope which was the spring of its joy. The gospel was good news, glad tidings. The New Testament is a book full of happiness. The words "sad" and "sadness" do not occur in it. The word sorrow in one form or another is found a score of times, but the word "joy" more than threescore times; the word "glad," in its different forms, nearly twoscore. "The Kingdom of God is joy," said St. Paul. "These words have I spoken unto you," said Jesus, "that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full." The early Christians were happy with a great happiness. They had no fear of man or of death. They were joyful even in all their tribulation. The very Spirit of God which was in them was love and joy and peace. Any representation of the primitive church which misses this is a misrepresentation.

And the real root of the early Christians' joy lay, as the New Testament so clearly reveals, first in the sense of what Christ had done for them, second, in the experience of his living presence, and third, in the hope of his coming again. It was this last of which the New Testament constantly spoke. It calls it "that blessed hope" and "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

We are sometimes told that in its watchfulness for Christ's return the early church was deceived; that it mistakenly believed that Christ was surely coming back in that generation. It may be that there were some who held this view but the writers of the New Testament did not commit themselves to it, though they clearly lived under the admonition to watch and wait. And so throughout the centuries where the foundations of joy have been open in the church there also has been the deathless expectation of Christ's coming. We need to recover it today and not to be repelled from it and to lose the glory and power of it through the excesses and errors of men, or through the unbelief and naturalism of modern thought. Even in the church there are great bodies of Christians who by a dissolving interpretation have transformed this joyful hope into nothing but the patient endurance of hardness or the humble preparation for death or into the thought of the distant and unanticipated end of all things. We pay the penalty for all this, in the loss of the joy and hope of the New Testament. We need to recover it.

IV

And lastly we need to recover the missionary passion of New Testament Christianity. Perhaps this is not an altogether accurate statement because, alas, with all its glory, part of New Testament Christianity lacked the passion of the world-wide extension of the gospel. St. Paul had it. He had it because it was inherent in the fullness of the gospel itself. His missionary purpose did not rest on what we call "The Great Commission." He knew that in Christianity commandments do not create duty. They simply express and describe it. He knew Christ and that was enough. In Christ was life provided for himself and for all mankind and he was debtor both to Jew and Greek to share that life with every man. We need to get back his molten passion and his iron purpose.

But the early church was filled with the missionary passion in another sense. Even if Christians were slow to see their duty to those far away, they were quick to see it to the men and women next to them and to the fabric of human life and they preached Christ, the traveler to his fellow traveler, the soldier to his fellow soldier, the galley slave to the rower chained next to him, the woman to the other women who were drawing water with her from the well. Early Christianity spread as a contagion of freedom and purity and joy. And it proceeded to penetrate all human relationships, the relation of employer and employee, of master and slave, of husband and wife, of citizen and foreigner, of rich and poor. And Christians confronted their problems and their duties, including the problems of military service and war, of poverty and idleness, of wealth and selfishness in the light that shone in the life and the death and the resurrection of Christ.

We cannot go back across the centuries and live again the life of the first Christian generation. Both for better and for worse, we live in a vastly different world, in the main immeasurably better, but Jesus Christ is the same now that he was then, the same yesterday, today and forever. And the Bible is the book that preserves the fullness of his message, the story of his work, and in which the Spirit of God that was in him speaks another new and added message to each new day.

We need to hear its call now, to recover its ideal of human personality, revealed to us and fulfilled in us in

Christ, to achieve again its conception of the corporate life and love of the Christian society, to discover afresh the abounding joy of its hope of Christ's coming again, and to be rebaptized by that Spirit of passion and of power that sent the early church out to turn the world upside down, and to fulfill in and across the nations the purpose of him who came to make peace through the blood of his Cross, to reconcile all things to himself, to destroy all enmities, and to unite mankind in the body of his flesh through death that he might present the world again holy and unblamable in his sight. Let us no longer degrade him "by the transformation of his revolutionary disclosure into an established and conservative tradition at truce with the world and in bondage to propriety."

The Bible speaks to us with a different appeal. "It is high time now to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light." Let us go forward by going back to the Bible. As one of our most beloved younger preachers who has been taken from us used to say: "Let us go forward, looking back to Him who is always ahead of us."

Alas, that this unity of the church should be so shattered as it is among us today; that we should fall so far short of the New Testament ideal of the fellowship that is a unity; that we should hear the continuous voices, of which our Lord once spoke, calling "Lo, here is Christ" and "No you have him not. He is here with us." Even that group of Christians, the Plymouth Brethren, which started out with the two principles of "the unity of the church, which is the Body of Christ and the absence of a clerical caste in the New Testament and the unscriptural character of a man ordained ministry," has displayed the most tragic divisiveness of all.

But was it not this very glow and fervor and unity and unselfish love in the church which gave it its power at the beginning? To be sure, no small part of its success must have been due to the clarity of the reply that it gave to the bewildered minds of men. The world had lost its way in the dark. Then Christianity came with its clear and sure message about God and man, and life, and death, and duty, and destiny. But equally with its clear and satisfying intellectual message shone forth from Christianity the glow and glory of its love and fellowship. The very protest of the New Testament against the ruptures of this unity show how supreme the ideal was and how rich its realization. Each little Christian group was a family. One does not wonder at all that the initial impulse in Jerusalem was to possess all things in common. If there is to be a new communism it had best be a return to primitive Christianity. Although that first communistic economy passed, the love and unity of the church did not pass.

This is what we need to get back today, the glow of Christlike love in individual lives; the warmth of family spirit in the local congregation, and the unity of truth and trust in the church at large which banishes, with all the condemnation of the New Testament, those works of the flesh among which St. Paul named hatred, variance, wrath, strife and seditions.

The situation in which we are living today constitutes a powerful appeal to the Christian Church to recover the unity and love of Bible Christianity. Unless the local congregation can become the most vital center of human affections, of ministry to human need and unemployment and suffering, the richest and most genuine bond of human fellowship, then other agencies wholly apart from the institutions of the church will take up these tasks and meet these wants in the hearts and lives of men. And likewise in the larger sphere of the church in its denominational and national life, unless the New Testament ideal can be recovered there is only pitiful dissension and failure in view for us.

We need to go back to the Bible, to the Upper Room, and to the new commandment, "that ye love one another even as I have loved you."

'Yea!'

By Ralph Marshall Davis

Yea. . . . Psalm 23:4.

"YEA, though I walk!" What gallant aggressiveness! A sheep on a stroll with a "yea" in his heart. Impertinent, unperturbed sheep! What a flair for courage has our poem-master! Is it sheep or poet speaking? Poorly does he disguise his identity. Positive is his progress. Much progress is negative and critical—without program or policy. This progressive climbs to amazing assurance on a "yea." His "yea" is his immunity against his wraiths of shadows. He is peripatetic with a "yea" in his scrip.

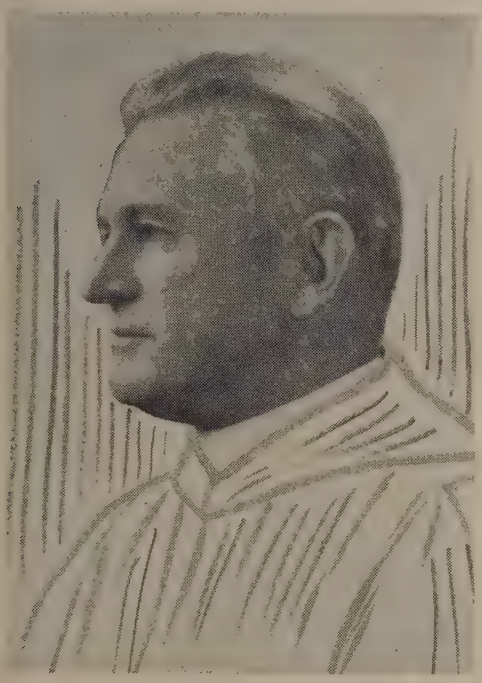
Our psalmist needs a conviction by means of which he may besiege and assault the citadel of his own doubt. Note that his fear is not that of impenetrable darkness; merely that of the illusive shadow. He uses the battering ram of a "yea." In quest of a light to cheer his timid soul quite as much as to dispel the darkness, he whistles his faith with a "yea." With abandon he flings himself against the barriers of the inevitable; challenges the hazards of an unpredictable future; steps into the adventure of the indistinct; and all he uses is a simple monosyllable. Note the push and pull of it; the cohesion and the thrust of it; the speculative and giddy risk of it—of this "yea." It stands its vigil alert and erect; talks of altitude rather than latitude; trusts to its own inspired intuitions; gazes with disconcerting composure into the half obscured trail ahead. "Yea!"

OUR FAITHLESS GENERATION

Could we by any right of logic say that our own generation needs an infusion of "yea" into its thinking and acting? Perhaps the fecund soil of us contemporaries needs the deep sowing of some fertile and fertilizing convictions. The plowing of the latter years has been violent but thorough. The opened crust of things awaits a planting. Some of us believe that a

"yea" must go forth to sow. Putting it differently: the keys of the city belong to him who brings the assertiveness of a great faith. World over, we note the race of man following the inspiring creator of a "yea." True, little discrimination is manifest; little critical analysis employed—yet the hero of our bewildered hour is the supplier of our "yea" for us. In return for it the world's political messiahs are demanding a complete control and discipline. Forget not, however, these men are merchants of "yea."

Not a few of our fellow citizens are becoming ashamed of their semi-embarrassed parade of negative doubt. "Nay" has been in the saddle and chasing hu-



Ralph Marshall Davis

miliated "yea" up every available tree. With many, skepticism became a faith and infidelity a fetish. "Nay" became the smart social custom and the customary paraded synonymous with morality. The stalwarts of the mighty past were dissected ruthlessly to see if they were stuffed with sawdust. Even our fathers of the recent past were feverishly analyzed with a predetermined conclusion of disapproval. Being both egotistical and negative, we made indoor sport of venerable institutions and confused destruction with progress. With clever and irresponsible epigram we laid waste the patient work of a century. Many wisecracked the sacred into the ash can; wrote new formulae for conduct out of swing hysteria and turned thumbs down on every faith that looked beyond the closing hours of the best cocktail bars. With the conflagration set by the incendiary "Nay" about completed, perhaps we are beginning to think of our reconstruction by means of a cautious, candid, energetic and earnest "Yea."

Let us admit that "But I say unto you" comes from few lips today with complete and sincere appropriateness. Dogma is in bad odor—that is, bad dogma is in bad odor. This in spite of the fact that ours is the supreme age of impudent dogma. Between the dogma of the steel-mouthed monster—our modern war-lord—and the siren tones of the screeching new economic dogmas as they madly chase each other headlong into oblivion, the common man is caught. He knows one thing: that the voice of dogma is heard in the land. The ancient word "freedom" is but a memory to many peoples on earth today. They have exchanged the doughty dogmatists of the past for the dogged dogmatists of the present.

A BENIGN DICTATOR

Yet people tire of their driving and will some day be willing to be led by someone who walks by their sides as he leads. Such a Leader-Companion is Jesus. He can speak "But I say unto you" without offense. He can be positive because of his internal "yea," yet no one accuses him of being dogmatic. Jesus is assuredly dictator but he is more than a mere blustering, military annoyance and annoyer. His redemptive benefits are never labeled "emergency"—nor are they admittedly fugitive. The permanent ruler of the minds of men must come as the free election of the truth which those minds themselves make. "Come let us reason together" is Christianity's defensive mechanism against a tyrannical infallibility and a fallible tyranny. The "yea" of the spirit only gives tolerance, otherwise we have but poor toleration. We Christians have our innings just now in which we may prove the positive temper and poise of a sustaining "yea" which brings forth the sober product of faith. "Yea!"

In order to be a "yea" man it is not necessary to be a controversialist. To shout loudly or to maintain heatedly does not make the truth truer. Argument may be but the bully shouting a cause that is defeated but hasn't admitted it. Controversy is often merely stubbornness having an undisciplined time of it. The "yea" man makes up his mind enough to act upon it but not enough to get mad about it. His assurance is the product of his serene faith and not of his belabored pugnacity. He is not afraid to make up his mind nor does he lose his dignity if he changes it. He has his obedient "yea" without ossifying himself into hocus-pocus formulæ. He knows the danger of translating his living credo into a legibility. Most men at their finest will die for their "yea" although they may refuse to argue about it. "Yea, though I walk" is the life program of the grandly confident, not the complacent theory of the obscurantist who sits rather than moves.

'YEA' BUILDS HIGHWAYS

The man with the "yea" is seldom defeatist. He is going somewhere. "Though I walk. . . ." To tarry is to destroy; to linger is to stagnate; to hesitate is to die. Flowers are positive when they spring to the sun; bees hum "yea" and off they go to their honey making; birds sing "yea" when they fly back north. The everlasting world is its own parable of the ever-

lasting amen. Only man could spring into the dark of the shadows; only man could risk defeat. But defeat is not essential to man's greatness. The "yea" saves us both from the morbidity of frustration and from glorying in our fancied disillusionments. The spurious camaraderie of faithlessness has fallen sadly of late and those whose only victories are the defeats of their faith have become passé. "Yea" is the builder of highways ahead of us; it ends in no disappointing *cul de sacs.* It views its own temptations to pessimism with calm-eyed certainty, believing it safe to trust God and itself. Its misfortunes become its cobblestones. It joins no fraternity with the Man of Kerioth who remains forever the symbol of the silvery way of "Nay."

"Yea" proclaims life a blue-printed and purposeful matter of stable and calculable dimensions. The debris makers of our topsy-turvy hour should be reminded of the soul of man and that some day the lethargic energies of this soul will arouse it to the mighty vision of life as an elaboration of an authentic purpose. We have had our fill of life's definition in terms of economic twaddle. Still defiant stand the words, "Man shall not live by bread alone." Pompous little Caesar parading himself in tawdry finery; uttering swelling pretensions that have been unfulfilled; occupying the triple role of prophet, priest and king in solemn incompetency—has sought to give values to our lives by his mono-legislative edict. Premiers have become voices of the All-Highest and law gives us the stature of our manhood. Government rides the backs of the governed. Caesar formerly wanted merely taxes; today he haunts the taxed.

SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

The "yea" in the imperial soul is due for a resurrection. Its revolt will be toward an elastic responsibility. To the man who has fought for and won a "yea" in his heart, progressful change is looked upon as a step through the dark into the light. He thrills at the inscrutable, is brave enough to live with the incredible and gullible enough to believe in himself. Believing in his own relative sanity he cannot believe that life's Maker is a grotesque imbecile, that his children are the drooling idiots of his insane spawning. How curative, fresh-blowing, sanitary the "yea" that trusts a world careered to an illimitable, purposeful and religious progress! Let us believe and assert that "yea" triumphantly!

We may and can say "yea" in our personal trust in the good intentions of good men. After allowing candidly for the breakdowns of character, still enough is salvaged to reward our trusting character, Christian character at its best. Assaulted by pseudo-science, scorned by the intelligentsia, neglected by politics if not persecuted, deserted by many of her friends, forced to live on the belated pennies of her sectarian supporters, laughed at by pagan and roundly cursed by her foes, the church still remains a vehicle for the production of a dependable Christian mode of thought and action. The fruits of the spirit are still unalterably fruits of the spirit. It is not only a generous thing to do, it is a sane thing to trust honor and honesty, kindliness and chivalry, duty and affection, purity and fidelity. Character of Christlike color can be attained.

Let us grant that twenty centuries have made poor and inadequate uses of our Lord and Master. True, our idolatries have grown more beautiful if less true; our barbarities more cunning but no less painful; our greeds more clever but more universal; our pleasures more luxurious but more boring; our adulteries less defiant, but more submissive and less attractive. But just as true—the pay-off of sin is still death and is amply illustrated not in religious journals but in those which recite the orgies of a world needy of Christ.

"Yea!" We may still believe in the Savior of men and in the man saved by Christ. "Yea!" Let's say it in spite of the darkness ahead, in spite of enemies real or imaginary, in spite of the shaky confidence we have in the ability of our race to muster its faith, in spite of the loneliness of the "walk" we are called upon to take, in spite of the appalling failure of us to halt the retreat of man back to his bloody lair.

"Yea!" For he who says "yea" is on the side of immortality.

The Contemporary Crisis of the Church

By Charles H. Heimsath

Ye tithe mint, and anise, and cumin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faith. Matthew 23:23.

THE world today is not asking the churches as it did in the nineteenth century, "Is Christianity true?" but in this twentieth century it is asking, "Will Christianity work?" The issue is no longer between science and religion, but between the principles of our acquisitive society and the precepts of Jesus.

To put the matter in an over-simple epigram, the issue today is not between Darwin and Christ, but between Mammon and Christ, between Mars and Christ. Organized upon greed and self-interest, the world finds itself headed at high speed straight down the road to destruction; the church through the centuries has offered another and better way of life organized upon the principles of cooperation and consideration for others. The world is demanding that we make good this better way of life.

Our present crisis in religion is brought into sharp focus by these words of Jesus: "Ye tithe mint and anise and cumin, and have left undone the mightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faith." Here we catch first the clear emphasis of Jesus upon the moral imperative of religion, and secondly his insistence upon its social effectiveness.

I

Take first the moral imperative of religion, the duty of the Christian to man. Jesus said clearly that piety is no substitute for ethics.

I am sure it will come as no shock to people who have read history to remind you that religion is not necessarily connected with morals. It never occurred to the savage that his religious faith should modify his conduct; he did not try to live an honest and an upright life because he worshiped this or that god. So far was religion removed from ethics in the popular thought of Greece that the private life of Olympian deities was more than often questionable. Only after centuries of spiritual achievement did a Hebrew prophet arise with this ethical insight, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly

CHARLES H. HEIMSATH

with thy God?" And it was not until Jesus linked the love of God with the love of man, that faith in God and duty to man became two sides of the same thing.

The story of man's inhumanity to man is a strange and pathetic tale. The Canadian *Reader's Digest* gave an account of a lynching. A woman returning to her little town on the sleepy railroad received this greeting from the friendly conductor, "Getting back just in time for the lynching?" When the slow burning to death of a human being is made the occasion for a public holiday for the whole town, young and old, church people and non-church people, we wonder about civilization and Christianity. The irrational bitterness of people toward other races—the cruel indifference of people to the poverty and suffering of their fellows! We wonder about these things.

Duty to man has never been congenial to the religious personality as faith in God. From time immemorial pious people have warmed to the accents of God, but have remained strangely unmoved by the voice of human anguish. Talk of prayer, scripture reading, and "conversion" always has the proper ring, but good people question that justice, mercy and fidelity are of God. Such topics sound a little off color, as though they might have been inspired by propaganda from Moscow. We Christians fumble the moral principles which Jesus called "the weightier matters of the law." So half-hearted were the representatives of religion toward their fellows that Jesus cried in indignation, "How can you love God whom you have not seen if you love not man whom you have seen?" Again his resentment flashed against that easy piety which often becomes a cloak for the neglect of human right, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cumin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and fidelity."

Jesus forever saw disturbing truth good people could not, or dared not, look at: he saw piety, for example, come dangerously near to moral evasion. He saw church people busy themselves with the lesser duties of religion because consciously or unconsciously they stepped from under the human moral load. When the religious person becomes fatigued or disillusioned, he has always secretly hungered for ready-made salvation, the salvation which comes out of heaven from God, and which relieves him of the stern duty of saving himself—and others. Upon one occasion Jesus suggested that his disciples cast out the unclean spirits of men, but they looked at him horrified! The Gospel narrative leaves us to wonder if Jesus did not require them to share his redemptive power, and if this meaning has not been explained away by interpreters who could not stand up to the force of it. At any rate we know the disciples firmly refused the prerogatives of salvation.

Do present moral and social issues belong to the church? Are Christians charged by God to be the saviors of society? Here we are at the heart of the present religious crisis. Many voices warn Christians to keep to their knitting. Many Christians are tempted to run to the shelter of their altars. At Edinburgh I heard learned bishops deny that man has any part in creating the Kingdom of God. When the Kingdom does come, it will come by a miracle from heaven. Commenting upon this flight from the Kingdom Dean-Emeritus Shailer Mathews remarks: "It is easier to promise salvation than to give justice." On the continent of Europe the dominant Barthian thought takes refuge in the absolute power of God out of despair of the moral qualification of man. In this country Reinold Neibuhr is leading a retreat of social liberals into the shelter of creedal certainties to cover their defeat in the practical application of Christianity.

We must be forever upon our guard: it is so much easier to repent than it is to make restitution; in other words, to take refuge in God than it is to make peace with man. Kenneth W. Porter has protested in the bitter sarcasm of poetry the ancient disparity between religious formalism and religious practice:

> The vestments in your church, they say,
> Are rich with dyes and stiff with gold;
> A thousand miners' kids today
> Hide in their shanties from the cold.

The chalice—gift of loving pride—
The gems blaze as you lift it up;
A thousand babies, solemn eyed,
Clink spoons within an empty cup.

II

Take secondly, the social effectiveness of religion. This text reminds us that in the thought of Jesus religious practice is more important than religious observance.

"Ye tithe mint and anise and cumin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faith." Jesus is saying in plain language that religious action is more valuable than religious celebration. And that is exactly what the world is saying to the church: "Teach us no more theology until you teach us religion we can live by. Talk to us no more about the love of God until we learn more of the love of man. Unless we can live together as brothers, there may be few of us left to worship God."

In the face of the world catastrophe the church must say something more convincing than "Let us pray." When their homes are on fire people have little interest in the depth of water in our baptistries, and when ten millions are out of work talk of "apostolic succession" sounds almost silly.

Recently I stood in Brussels at the spot where Edith Cavell was shot. Who can ever forget her last words, "Patriotism is not enough"? In our text Jesus says in effect, "Worship is not enough." Not that we are to abandon worship: "These ye ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Christian moral achievement roots back ultimately into a man's personal faith in God. All social effectiveness of the church rests upon the foundation of the Christian's private character. In one of the epistles to the Corinthians Dr. Goodspeed has this translation: "Ye are God's farm." The Christian personality is like a piece of ground, plowed, weeded, planted and fruitful. But even a personality productive as a farm is not enough unless it is fruitful in devotion to man as well as in devotion to God.

It has been said that if we can get a man converted, all these social issues will take care of themselves. This is true only if his conversion is complete—if he is a "new man" in his relations to man as well as in his relations to God. God protect us from "converted" men who can look with impunity upon injustice, persecution and war! What chance has the church if it is filled with such converted people? The world has the right to measure a Christian's conversion by the same standard as the Lord himself measured it: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

This leads to our important insight: when the church assumes to the full the social burden, it will not only redeem society but renew its own soul. When Jesus hung on the cross they taunted him: "He saved others, himself he could not save." Ironically these mockers spoke the same profound truth by which Jesus lived and died. Saving others, he could not save himself. Here is the cosmic law of life: only by the giving of life can new life ever be born. The church has lost its vitality because it has fought so hard for its own survival; it will regain its spiritual power only when it lays down its life in uncalculating service for the common good.

I once spent a long day in Chicago at a regional meeting searching out ways and means to raise the denominational budget. I returned weary and depressed at night to attend, in my line of ministerial duty, another meeting in Evanston. At this gathering my neighbor, Ernest F. Tittle, delivered a flaming appeal for peace. The passion and courage of this modern prophet in defense of a noble cause led me, as all the talk of church machinery had failed to do—into the presence of God! When the church enters the current conflict for justice, truth and peace it will find the ancient light of faith flaming once more in the eyes of humble Christians.

III

What practical acts can the church do to make good the moral imperative of religion and prove the effectiveness of its faith? When the issue of its social duty is raised, perplexed Christians often ask, "But what can the church do?" This is often a question of despair, but it can have one or two plain and helpful answers.

In the first place, the church is not expected to manage business or to run the state. We can thank God for that. We Christians are not called upon to produce the blueprints for the reconstruction of society; we are asked rather to point to the fixed stars by which alone any enduring society must be built. Dr. Fosdick has a sermon called "The Ethical Foundations of Society" in which he has this to say:

> Jesus knew nothing about our modern economic problems but he did know the laws of the moral world. And this is one of them: no nation can take the vast resources of a continent, which God gave to all people, and use them in careless disregard of the welfare of millions of the people, without in the end being punished, not for its sins but by its sins.

In the religion of Jesus are the foundation principles of social morality upon which alone the nation can build with security, and it is the duty of the church to believe with such conviction in these principles that it shall convince the world.

In the second place, we can create the public opinion which not only makes possible but demands the application of Christian principles in all the larger affairs of life. It was said of William E. Gladstone that he had a conscience "without a crack in it." Whenever private or social evil struck the conscience of Gladstone, it rang true as a bell. We Christians can develop in our churches and in society a conscience that rings true on justice, mercy and fidelity. We have had a conscience upon private morals; we must develop an equal conscience upon public morals. And when the *Chicago Tribune* tells the church it has no right to speak on social morals, we can develop a conscience against that kind of hypocrisy.

In the third place, the church can give practical thought to the religious needs of two large social groups which it has all but lost—youth and the laboring class.

Young people are facing a hostile world which denies them not alone the right to make a living, but the right even to live. Their problem is every whit a grim social one. If we are to command their confidence we must cease talking to them of mint, anise and cumin, and talk to them of justice, mercy and fidelity. The Protestant church has all but lost the ear of youth because it has refused to talk the language of youth.

Likewise the Protestant church has not held the laboring man. We are not called upon to take sides in disputes between capital and labor. Rightly or wrongly, however, the laboring man believes the church is on the side of the employer. Receiving little or no help from the church, he is going to communism or to fascism for his answers, because these religions of the state talk his language. The Protestant church can regain his loyalty, not by talking to him of mint, anise and cumin, but of justice, mercy and fidelity.

In the fourth place, the church can lift these moral principles, these weightier matters of the law, up to the level of worship. They have existed almost without the pale of religion; they must be given more than standing room in the sanctuary. The issue is not one of "either-or" but of "both-and"; it is not of worship *or* ethics but of worship *and* ethics. The two were never separated in the mind of Jesus. What he insisted upon in our text was this: moral duty to man must be coupled with mystical communion with God.

That is the highest service the church can give to society—to make the social good a matter of fervent prayer and costly loyalty. In a sermon on peace I said the chief service to peace the church can give is to lift peace to the level of worship. That is the wisest thing I have ever been able to think or say about peace. We must come into the presence of God to beat upon our breast and cry, "Lord, God be merciful upon our nation, a sinner." Many agencies are bent upon the building of a new and a better world without the help of God. Deliver us from the menace of godless crusaders! It is the duty and the high function of the Christian Church to lead in the building of a new and better world by invoking the blessing of God.

To Lincoln, the Liberator

YOU freed the slaves, the black men, from their chains;
You spoke for God that great word, Liberty;
But there are captives still, for all our gains,
And there are helpless serfs to be set free.

In fetid mines, men spend their hapless days;
Where death looms dark they earn their right to live.
In brute steel mills, athwart the furnace blaze
Strong men go down, and leave their loved to grieve.

In factories frail women win their bread—
Their babes bereft, neglected from their birth;
While toiling children, ere their youth is sped,
Are worn and old—poor, cheated sons of earth.

You freed the slaves, those slaves whose skins were black.
Our slaves are white—who seek their liberty.
Your task is done, our task awaits. Come back
And work with us to set *our* captives free.

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.

The Peace of Christ

BY HOBART D. MCKEEHAN

Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. John 20:19.

AMONG the thousands who have seen or read T. S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral," unquestionably one of the greatest plays of our time, many remember the significant words of the Archbishop. The scene is Canterbury Cathedral on Christmas morning and just a few days prior to his martyrdom. Archbishop Becket is delivering his Christmas sermon.

"Think for a while," he says, "on the meaning of this word 'peace.' Does it seem strange to you that angels should have announced Peace, when ceaselessly the world has been stricken with war and the fear of war? Does it seem to you that the angelic voices were mistaken, and that the promise was a disappointment and a cheat? Reflect now how our Lord himself spoke of peace. He said to his disciples, 'My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you!' Did he mean peace as we think of it: the kingdom of England at peace with its neighbors, the barons at peace with the king, the householder counting over his peaceful gains, the swept hearth, his best wine for a friend on the table, his wife singing to the children? Those men, his disciples, knew no such things: they went forth to journey afar, to suffer by land and sea, to know torture, imprisonment, disappointment, to suffer death by martyrdom. What then did he mean? If you ask that, remember then that he said also, 'Not as the world gives, give I unto you.' So then, he gave to his disciples, but not peace as the world gives."

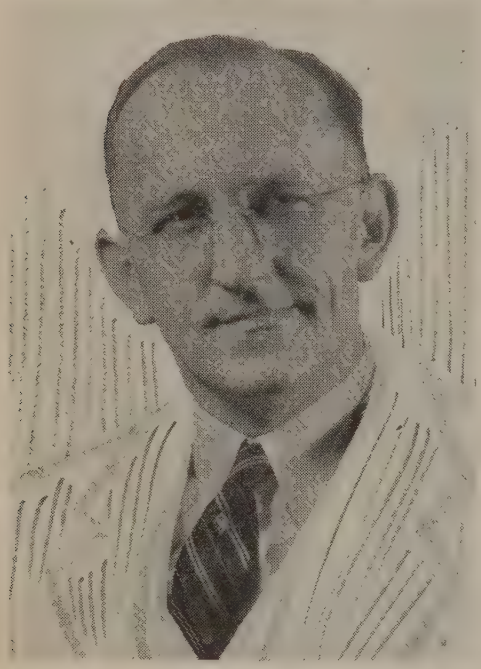
CHRIST'S PEACE AND THE WORLD'S PEACE

The dramatist thus brings together those two aspects of peace which seem to be so far apart from one another—peace which is the promise of Bethlehem, and peace which is the gift of the triumphant Christ. It is the thought of this sermon that the promise will remain only a promise until individuals and societies prepare to receive and appropriate the divine bestowal. The church itself, so immersed in the crucially important task of saving civilization from the tragedy of war, does not seem sufficiently clear in its comprehension of the nature of Christian peace.

Our text is singularly significant because it recalls an extraordinary phenomenon. Though Jesus saluted men saying, "Peace," which was an oriental greeting, and though he said, "Go in peace," he never once approached the Apostolic group with the salutation, "Peace be to you" until he died and rose again from the dead. Only after he had died by and for the great collective sin of mankind; only after he had overcome man's most ancient and most universal enemy—Death—did our blessed Lord bestow the gift of peace.

Let us, therefore, consider some of the characteristics of the peace of Christ and particularly as they stand above, or in contrast with, the peace which the world acclaims.

For one thing, the peace of Christ is not merely the quiet absence of hostility. It is, on the contrary, the tranquillity that follows upon order and the active principle of souls whose wills are united with the will of God. It was a fundamental distinction which the Angelic Doctor made in his *Summa* between *Pax* and *Concordia.* Said St. Thomas: "Wherever there is peace there is concord, but where there is concord there is not necessarily peace." Peace is neither an agreement to disagree nor an agreement imposed by force. It implies the union of human wills; or, as St. Thomas expressed it in his *Commentary Upon the Hebrews:*



HOBART D. MCKEEHAN

"Peace is no other thing than the union of all desire." If this be truth, then how small must be our hope for universal peace unless and until men and nations bow beneath the kindly but kingly sovereignty of Christ. Our poor world, long since in a state of suspended diplomatic relations with God, looks without seeing, seeks without finding, and continues to die from the poison of its own uninspired breath. And the cause of the tragedy lies not altogether outside the church itself.

A brilliant historian, seeking to explain the tremendous influence of the church during the first two centuries of our era and the decline of that influence during the third and fourth centuries, made this illuminating comment:

"During the first and second centuries the church was in the world; during the third and fourth the world was in the church." Does that speak to our condition now? If one were to write the story of the decline of the Christian ideal in western Europe and America could be do better than to entitle it "The History of the Compromises" which we have made with the world in the sphere of practice and, to a certain extent, in the sphere of theory?

LOVE THE SOURCE OF TRUE PEACE

For another thing, the peace of Christ is the word and the gift of one who has faced the cross and the grave and has proved himself victor. It is the benediction of one who knew that the last word did not lie with sin and death, but with life and love. I have the honor of belonging to two international organizations the object of which is world peace.

I am a constant and enthusiastic supporter of the aims and ideals of these great organizations and to them I have given no small measure of time. Nevertheless, as I think of world peace in the light of the teaching and bequest of Christ I seem to sense the source of impotence in all purely secular approaches to the problem. Our peace propaganda too often relies upon the dissemination of fear and suspicion. As has been so searchingly pointed out, it reveals an undue emphasis upon the significance, not of human life, but of human death. The supreme evil is not in the physical suffering and death which war entails but in the moral evil which makes war possible. Death is not the central tragedy of war. The central tragedy of war is the neurosis of civilization and the tides of hatred! Hence concord, as the old teachers spoke of it, may come to us by many paths—by arbitration, pacts, treaties, compromises—but peace can only come and come to stay when it is the by-product of a divinely inspired love.

In Christ that love conquered everything—hate, darkness, death. Are we satisfied that it shall do less in and for us? As a gifted and devoted minister of the gospel said to me, as we walked and talked in the street of a neighboring city, "What an agony it would be to feel enmity toward anybody God loves!" But, until our wills are at one with God's will, and by his grace there is a union of all desire, that saving agony cannot be ours.

JUSTICE IS NOT ENOUGH

At the moment the prophetic voices are rightly emphasizing the necessity of justice in the realization of peace. Before peace becomes a genuine possession of mankind there must be justice. But even here the last and deepest word is not being said. Justice cannot create peace. It can only remove the impediments to peace. Justice can open the shutters by which nationalism and mammonism blind us to the world's nature and need. But if we open the shutters at night, no light comes through. Justice can open the shutters but the light will only come when love comes. Everything justice demands must be done—done for the last and the least of men and nations—but that is not the end. Only when, through penitence and obedience to God, love is permitted to come and to stay will there be peace.

As I meditate on this thought my heart is haunted by some lines composed by that poet-preacher, the late Studdert-Kennedy:

Peace does not mean the end of all our striving.
Joy does not mean the drying of our tears.
Peace is the power that comes to souls arriving
Up to the light where God himself appears.

We must beware, however, lest our religion be employed as an escape-mechanism whereby we fail to meet the imminent evils of social injustice, militant atheism and nationalistic faith and fetish. The gift of Christ can come only to those who are prepared to learn the teaching and do the will of Christ at whatever cost to themselves. Christian people lament the official paganism of modern Germany and stand in awe before the monastery of the godless that is Russia. But where, after all, is the source and secret of these perversions? Jacques Maritain quotes a Russian Christian, now in exile, as saying: "The posture of Christian society in face of communism is not only the posture of one who carries in his heart eternal and absolute truth; it is also the posture of the culprit who has failed to live this truth; who has betrayed it!"

Does that speak to our condition? Does it reveal the weakness of Christianity's yesterday? This much at least must be said: A Christianity which is only believed and not lived is no match for a communism or paganism that is lived as well as believed!

'IN HIS WILL IS OUR PEACE'

My concluding word must be a reemphasis of my contention that the peace of Christ is a gift from God. It is not of human origin. It is the inner and outer harmony of souls, and the triumphant serenity of those who can say, "In his will is our peace." Who knows but that God is bestowing upon us the final discipline of our salvation as he shows us the complete collapse of all visible majesty?

We ought to begin to see that there can be no genuine peace save as it is a Christian peace; and that our immediate need is for what Dean Inge has called "a transvaluation of all values in the light of our divine sonship, our human brotherhood, and our heavenly citizenship." We need not minimize human effort in behalf of justice and concord, but we must magnify divine grace and love as essential to the realization of our ideal to live as we pray and build as we dream. Our distorted vision of man cannot be repaired until we have reclaimed our lost vision of God. And that lost vision, as well as the empowerment of man by God, is not distant or inaccessible. The risen Lord who said, "Peace be to you," did not knock; he "came." He "stood in the midst." And thus does he stand today—holding in his broken hand the red rose of our salvation and white lily of our peace. Do we see him? Do we hear him? Do we receive and willingly obey him? And are we prepared, breathing the atmosphere of eternal values, to live and labor with kindred souls who have caught the vision?

One of the supreme passages in the Christian literature of peace is that in which Dante describes how he and Beatrice met Piccarda the saintly nun in Paradise. They have just arrived in the lowest sphere of bliss, where Piccarda and others like her dwell; and "untaught as yet as to what makes Heaven what it is," Dante asks her whether she is content, and has no desire to be with those who have reached a sphere nearer to the highest. And she replies:

Brother, the might of love gives such employ
To our desires, that it can make us will
Just what we have, unmix'd with thirst's alloy.
If we desired to pass on higher still,
Then our desires would be at variance found
With His who bids us here His mansions fill—
So of our bliss this is cause formal, clear,
That each upon God's will himself should stay,
That so our wills may all one will appear.
So our whole realm rejoiceth in the way
In which from stage to stage we upward mount
As doth the King whose Will doth our wills sway,
And in His Will of our peace is the fount.

My own judgment is that, if the influence of the American churches in the furtherance of socially wholesome and forward-looking movements, in the spread of conscientious living of all sorts, were to be eliminated, our democracy would in a few years become so corrupt that it could not endure. ROBERT A. MILLIKAN.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Robert M. Bartlett

OUR Father, we know we are Thy children, bound by a sacred vow with our brother, Jesus Christ, to bring the Kingdom of Love into the world. We are linked with Christ in a covenant that is inviolable, to care for all people, to serve and sacrifice for their welfare. We are by our Christian profession members of the society of those who care.

O Father, drive home to our hearts the understanding that the gracious reign of Christ's ideals can come only through the brave effort of those who care. Save us from living as hermits, as little minds, or half-grown Christians. We would be swept out into the current of Thy growing Kingdom, where gigantic enterprises are in the making, where bold grapplings with old foes are in process.

Help us to lose ourselves in the divine force of friendliness. Inspire us to send out in prayer and deed the leaven that is to transform mankind. Teach us, O God, to comprehend the soul of our religion in this simple practice of caring for our brothers! Let us not forget that to care is to love, and to love is to transform, and to transform is to build Thy Kingdom upon the earth.

Bring us, we beseech Thee, into that Christly fellowship of those who care enough to suffer for mankind! Amen.

The Preacher and His Books

By Lewis H. Chrisman

WHEN Howard Tuckerman returned to his study in the church late in the afternoon he found it occupied by his clerical neighbor Dr. Monroe, minister of the Main Street Church. "You have a rather large library for a young preacher," boomed the doctor, "but I'm surprised to see so much dead wood in it. You have dozens of books in history, a whole shelf of biographies and all this literature. I don't see how in the world you get time to read it. In these days when there are so many books in a preacher's own line he can hardly afford to dabble in everything." As he listened to this gratuitous advice Howard, who had been somewhat proud of his library, which represented many a sacrifice, felt a sense of surprised chagrin. He thought: "Perhaps I am wrong. Probably I should have bought a new commentary instead of Mencken's *The American Language*. And as much as I've enjoyed it, Carl Sandburg's *The People, Yes* was possibly not the wisest purchase for a ministerial library."

● *Non-Professional Reading*

To what extent should a preacher confine his reading to the literature belonging exclusively to his profession? When Theodore Roosevelt as a candidate for Vice-President of the United States was traveling through the middle west making stump speeches, Mark Hanna was somewhat worried to notice that he read many books which appeared to be miles away from the matter at hand. The Cleveland magnate, being unable to understand why a campaign speaker should read a life of Charlemagne, a history of Norwegian sagas, a book about birds or a volume of poetry, presented him, as a tactful suggestion, with a copy of the party handbook. Are there preachers who need a similar gentle hint?

In the answering of such a question an excursion into the field of ministerial biography might be illuminating. Although there are reasons why modern biographies are more rewarding in this regard, a discussion of the book-life of the preacher would be woefully inadequate if there was no mention of John Wesley and the exceptionally wide range of his reading. In commenting upon it as revealed in the *Journal* James Denny writes: "All kind of people turn up in his pages—Ephraim the Syrian, Calvin and Loyola, Episcopius and Baxter, Doddridge and Zinzendorf, Erskine's Sermons and Home's Douglas." But even though some of this material is decidedly esoteric, it is not of the type which would justify a captious critic's charging him with straying from the ecclesiastical reservation.

These, though, are but a few of the authors mentioned in this inexhaustible *Journal*. It contains unmistakable evidence of Wesley's familiarity with the following authors: Homer, Plato, Xenophon, Demosthenes, Anacreon; Lucian, Virgil, Cicero, Juvenal, Horace; Ariosto, Tasso;

Lewis H. Chrisman

Voltaire, Rousseau; Shakespeare, Milton, Cowley, Dryden, Locke, Pope, Swift, Prior, Young, Thomson, Gray, Sterne, Johnson and Ossian. And this is but the beginning. Hundreds of current books in fields like travel, history and biography are mentioned. Apparently Wesley was not afraid of gathering "dead wood" in the forest of printed material. One of his many comments upon reading deserves quotation at this juncture: "To read nothing but the New Testament, and to think of nothing but the gospel induces a kind of spiritual feverishness which is not intellectually wholesome."

● *A Biblical Preacher Who Read Widely*

A glimpse into the library of a distinguished nineteenth century preacher, Alexander Whyte, for a half century minister of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, is richly suggestive concerning ministerial reading. Those familiar with books like *Lord, Teach us to Pray, With Mercy and Judgment* and *Bible Characters* know that Dr. Whyte was one of the most biblical of preachers. These same sermons, however, give us incontrovertible evidence that the "specialist in sin" was in his reading a man of magnificent vistas. One of the outstanding values of *The Life of Alexander Whyte* by G. F. Barbour is the information which it gives about the reading of a great preacher. Probably Dr. Whyte's three preeminent literary enthusiasms were Carlyle, Bunyan and Dante. In the years when he was a working lad and a struggling teacher the books of the towering Scotchman of the age were fine gold to him. Dante stood near the center of his intellectual life. From the days of his early ministry to the end of his life he was a student of the writings of the Tuscan poet-seer. But the dominating literary influence of his reading was John Bunyan. Through his incomparable *Bunyan Portraits* the inspired tinker of Bedford spoke once more to a generation which had already shown a tendency to leave him unread.

Dr. Whyte read widely as well as intensively. Some of his literary enthusiasms were Sir Thomas Browne, Dickens, Thackeray, the Brontes, George Eliot, Ruskin, Macaulay, Wordsworth, Newman and Shakespeare. Of one of his contemporaries he wrote, "I have had literally and etymologically a debauch of Chesterton this week." While Robert Louis Stevenson was still in obscurity he prophesied his future renown. James M. Barrie he read, quoted and admired.

● *A Theologian Who Was a Literary Critic*

Information in regard to the range of the reading of another mountain-peak preacher can be gleaned from the writings of the biography of George A. Gordon, whose distinguished ministry in Old South Church ended in 1927. Although Dr. Gordon was fundamentally a theologian and a philosopher, his reading was by no means confined to these allied fields. His contacts with literature were especially wide and deep. It would be hard to find better literary criticism than that which can be collected from his writings. A typical passage is the following from *The New Epoch for Faith* which summarizes the attitude of a group of nineteenth century authors toward the spirit of democracy:

"Scott was an aristocrat and a Tory; Wordsworth and Coleridge lived to regret their first love for the Revolution, and partially, at least, to renounce their faith in it. Byron and Shelley and Keats count for beauty, hardly for the characteristic enterprise of the century and not at all for ideas. Tennyson is no democrat; Emerson, our own best voice, is mystic and beautiful, but somewhat vague and uncertain. Browning is the only literary genius of the first order who stands first and last and all the time for the inalienable rights and the sure progress of man."

Dr. Gordon's sermons and other works abound in quotations from his fellow Scots, Burns and Carlyle, especially the former. Another of his favorites seems to be Edmund Burke, the eloquent Irishman who "saturated politics with thought." A study of Dr. Gordon's works also indicates a comprehensive knowledge of history and a keen insight into the significance of world-shaping personalities and events.

• *Dr. Cadman's Amazing Knowledge of Books*

Another preacher whose wide reading and Macaulay-like memory impressed itself upon all of his discriminating hearers was S. Parkes Cadman. A study of four of Dr. Cadman's books, *Charles Darwin and Other English Thinkers, Answers to Everyday Questions, Imagination and Religion* and *Ambassadors of God,* causes a person to wonder more and more "that one small head could carry all he knew." His almost unbelievably wide reading can be rather definitely divided into two groups, books with which he had a passing acquaintance and those which he had "chewed and digested." In this regard he was typical of many discriminating readers. A well-informed man is acquainted with many books and there are some books which he knows so well that they are a part of the very warp and woof of his intellectual life. It was Dr. Cadman himself who said, "One book mastered is more profitable for you than a hundred superficially skimmed."

To mention even the fields in which he read largely would necessitate a task of cataloguing. It is highly illuminating to notice the authors of whom he spoke and wrote the most frequently. There is considerable evidence that Bunyan was also his favorite. In *Ambassadors of God* he pays a noble tribute to his style in the following words: "He abounds in body without inflation, and his simple, luminous sentences are models that cannot be improved upon. Although he had received no sort of academic training his equal in clarity, brevity, felicity and wealth of expression would be hard to find." In the same chapter he recommends that the young preacher second his study of Bunyan by that of Lincoln. He was an intense admirer and close student of Burke, who had a marked influence upon his own prose.

A book from which he quoted frequently and often recommended was James Martineau's *Types of Ethical Theory.* It is safe to say that few of our generation had read Milton so intensively and understandingly. Among the other luminaries of literature to whom he devoted hour after hour through the years were Newman, Bacon, Montaigne, Tennyson, Shakespeare and Browning. Emerson in his essay on "Books" gives us the very dubious advice to refrain from reading a book until it is a year old. If all of us practiced this, it is a little difficult to see how a book could last a year.

It was once exaggeratedly said of Theodore Roosevelt that he seemed to have read every important book as soon as it appeared. This, of course, could not be truly said of anybody. But like the elder Roosevelt Dr. Cadman had such a marvelous assimilative capacity and such wide range of interest that technical ecclesiastical literature comprised but a small part of his reading.

• *Light from Contemporary Literature*

Was Dr. Monroe right in rebuking ing his young colleague for "wasting his time" on history, biography, poetry and novels"? Homiletical biography answers with a decided no. And with this the outstanding masters of the art of homiletics would agree. Dr. Dale of Birmingham in the Lyman Beecher Lectures for 1878 very strongly intimated that a preacher might not be guilty of a serious offense if on a railroad journey he substituted a volume by Mark Twain or Bret Harte for Athanasius or Aquinas. He also remarked that *Arabian Nights* was edifying reading and that *Don Quixote* might teach one as much as a month in Spain. He further added: "I am convinced that we ought to keep up a fair acquaintance with contemporary literature. If we know nothing of the books that our congregations are reading, they will soon learn to think of us as intellectual foreigners—strangers to their ways and thoughts, ignorant of a large part, and in some respects the most interesting part, of their lives."

More than a half century ago Austin Phelps epigrammatically wrote, "Oblivion of libraries is akin to softening of the brain." The preacher of today exceedingly seldom needs that type of exhortation. As a rule he is a bookman. Many a time has he worn the old coat but bought the new book. But "oblivion of libraries" is not the only intellectual sin. Although it might be putting it too strongly to say that reading of purely professional material exclusively is "akin to softening of the brain," its detrimental influence upon the intellectual life would be hard to exaggerate.

If all of a preacher's reading is a part of a never-ending search for homiletical material, the result is intellectual stagnation. "Did you ever read Homer's Odyssey?" I once asked a venerable preacher. "Yes," was the prompt and astounding reply, "but I didn't get anything out of it but one illustration." Such an attitude is both a cause and a result of restricted horizons. The most effective reading is done primarily for pleasure. Is is, though, no trivial pastime. It broadens the vision, deepens the sympathy, stimulates the mind and enriches the life. There is no substitute for great books as food for the brain and sustenance for the heart.

We are repelled by that confident theological doctrine which has settled for all generations just how the spiritual world is worked; but we need not turn aside from the measure of light that comes into our experience showing us a Way through the unseen world.

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

REV. HAROLD C. PHILLIPS *was born* in Jamaica and came to the United States in 1912. Graduating from Denison University, he received his M.A. degree from Columbia, and his B.D. from Union Theological Seminary. Ordained in the Baptist ministry in 1922, he was pastor of First Church, Mt. Vernon, N. Y. for six years; since 1928 he has ministered at First Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

Since 1920 Rev. EDGAR DEWITT JONES has ministered in Detroit at Central Christian Church—later Central Woodward Christian Church. Preceding his service there, he had a notable pastorate of fourteen years at First Church, Bloomington, Ill. He has held many posts of honor and responsibility in his own communion and was president of the Federal Council of Churches, 1937-38. He has written many books. Dr. Jones has long been an ardent student of the career of Abraham Lincoln. The sermon in this issue received a prize award provided in the will of the late Rev. W. J. Long, who wrote a biography of Lincoln. It is used through the courtesy of the Lincoln Sermon Committee, New York.

Entering the Methodist ministry in 1905, Rev. FRANKLIN J. KENNEDY held pastorates at Middletown and Rochester, N. Y., Pittsfield, Mass., New Haven, Conn., Meadville, Pa., Minneapolis, Minn., and since 1937 has ministered to the Methodist Church in Floral Park, Long Island, N. Y. At New Haven Mr. Kennedy founded the Wesley Foundation at Yale and at Minneapolis he was active in municipal affairs.

Dr. ROBERT E. SPEER *was secretary of* the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions from 1891 to 1937. He has served as president of the Federal Council of Churches, as moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and as chairman of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. The titles of his twenty or more books reveal his central interests. Among them are *The Man Christ Jesus, Remember Jesus Christ, The Principles of Jesus, Missions and Modern History, Christianity and the Nations, The New Opportunity for the Church, Race and Race Relations, The Church and Missions, The Finality of Jesus Christ.*

Ordained in the Presbyterian ministry in 1911, Rev. RALPH MARSHALL DAVIS held pastorates in San Francisco, Boston, St. Louis, Chicago and Erie, Pa.; since 1937 he has ministered at First Presbyterian Church, Oakland, Cal. He received his theological education at San Francisco Theological Seminary, Harvard and Boston University.

Rev. CHARLES H. HEIMSATH *received* his M.A. degree from the University of Texas and taught in that school for four years. Later he pursued theological studies at Yale Divinity School and received his B.D. degree there. Following a pastorate at Bridgeport, Conn., he went to First Baptist Church, Evanston, Ill., where he now ministers.

Since 1924 Rev. HOBART D. MCKEEHAN has ministered at the Abbey Church in Huntingdon, Pa. He was graduated from the Reformed Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa., and has B.D. and S.T.M. degrees from Lincoln-Jefferson University; he pursued post-graduate studies at Oxford University. He has written and edited a number of books.

Rev. ROBERT M. BARTLETT *is minister* of the First Christian Church, Longmeadow, Mass.

Dr. LEWIS H. CHRISMAN *is professor of* English literature in West Virginia Wesleyan College.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

WILLIAM HIRAM FOULKES, Old First (Presbyterian), Newark, N. J. "To Arms! To Arms!" Eph. 6—"Take unto you . . . and put on . . . the whole armor of God . . . that ye may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil . . . and to stand in the evil day . . . and, having done all, to stand. . . . Stand therefore."

WILLIAM A. HUBBARD, First Methodist, Chanute, Kan. "A Financial Partnership With God." Luke 6:38—"Give and it shall be given unto you." Matt. 10:42—". . . he shall in no wise lose his reward."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon

. . . . . .
Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .
Name of minister

. . . . . .
Name of church

. . . . . .
Address

G. RAY JORDAN, Centenary Methodist, Winston-Salem, N. C. "Why Does Not God Stop the War?" Matt. 18:14—"It is not the will of your Father in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish." Gen. 1:26—"Let us make man in our image."

DR. J. L. KESLER, Vanderbilt School of Religion. "The Rediscovery of Jesus." Luke 6:46—"Why call ye me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not the things which I say?"

WILLIAM H. HUDNUT, JR., Presbyterian, Glendale, Ohio. "How Shall We Meet Discouragement?" I Sam. 30:6—"David encouraged himself in his God."

JOHN HOWARD MELISH, Church of the Holy Trinity, New York. "Your Money and Your Life." Matt. 21:12, 13—"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves."

JOHN ATWOOD, Brayton Methodist, Fall River, Mass. "Spiritual Overtones." Eph. 5:18, 19—"Singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

I CAN think of no man in political life whose passing would touch me so personally as has the sudden death of Senator Borah. I do not claim to have known him intimately, but I knew him well enough to feel that I understood him. We became acquainted more than fifteen years ago through our mutual interest in the movement for the outlawry of war, both of us having been converted to the idea by its originator, Salmon O. Levinson. Borah's intellectual independence made him a kind of political party all by himself. He was governed by a few fundamental principles to which he referred every new issue that arose. If you knew these principles it was easier to predict Borah's position on specific issues than that of most men in public life. One of these fundamentals was his devotion to the democratic process. He believed in democracy, and sought at all times to keep its channels open—its economic, its political, its cultural and psychological channels. This made him suspicious of every form of concentrated power. He wanted power distributed as widely as possible. This principle controlled him in international affairs. He opposed America's participation in the League of Nations because he saw it as an instrument of power, and feared that the exercise of "sanctions" would involve this country in quarrels and wars with which it might not be concerned. He looked at nations with realistic eyes and saw them behaving within the league in ways not essentially different from their behavior were there no league. What his attitude would have been toward the current proposal for a world federation, beginning with a federation of Europe, one can only surmise. I venture to say that if and when the proposal became a concrete and vital possibility, Senator Borah, were he living, would be sympathetic toward it in principle, but critically vigilant that it should be a true *federation,* and not another league of nations under a different name.

The Passing of Senator Borah

The Book of the Month

OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. *By John Baillie. Scribners. $2.50.*

THIS book on theology is written by a Scottish teacher of theology who came to his famous chair in the University of Edinburgh after the successive occupancy of American chairs in Auburn and Union seminaries. One reason why I recommend Dr. Baillie's latest book is that, while it deals with the profoundest question in Christian thought, it approaches the problem with such simplicity that you have hardly any sense of the depth to which its author has lured your mind until he has landed you safely and firmly on the farther shore. His approach is essentially an empirical one. He does not try to prove God by argument, but undertakes to set our minds free to discern God's presence in the common experience of living. Two theses may be said to comprise the whole book. One is the thesis that all men, by virtue of being human, are continually confronted with the divine Presence. The other is that in Christianity this Presence becomes savingly potent. Even those who say they do not believe in God do nevertheless actually have commerce with him. We are as conscious of God, Dr. Baillie maintains, as we are of the external world or of the existence of other selves. This general consciousness of God becomes aware of itself in the vision of God which came to men through the presence of Jesus Christ.

A Thought for the Month

THE spiritual future of America will be determined by one of three major forces that are at work in our midst. These forces are Secularism, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. In the general breakdown of Western culture the soul of America is being reborn. Shall it be a secular soul, a Roman Catholic soul, or a soul fashioned by those forces which the Protestant Reformation set free? No doubt the strongest force at the moment is secularism. A society whose children and youth receive virtually no education save that which is afforded by our public schools is destined to be a secular society. The Roman Catholic Church sees this clearly and provides at enormous sacrifice for the religious education of its children. Protestantism has never sensed the situation clearly, but has blindly imagined that it could safely entrust its children's education to public, therefore non-religious, auspices. Its Sunday schools are only a pathetic gesture in the direction of Christian education. Unless Protestantism awakes to its default and projects an educational system which will supplement secular education with thoroughgoing religious education, the soul of America will become either secular or Roman Catholic. The Catholic Church is intensely active—in education, in the acquisition of vast properties, in the machinations of politics, in the steady gaining of control over the public schools. This activity cannot be offset by merely exposing and opposing it. It can be offset only by positive Protestant action on a scale commensurate with the educational system of Roman Catholicism itself. There are only two genuinely effective educational forces now at work—the public school, which is secular (and should be vigilantly kept so), and the Roman Catholic system. Protestantism must be awakened to its fateful responsibility for the soul of America.

Where Protestantism Is in Default

Charles Clayton Morrison

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